

Division for the Visually Impaired
Business Enterprise Program (BEP)
Blind Vendors Committee (BVC) Meeting Minutes
DVI Conference Room 203
1901 N. DuPont Highway, Biggs Building
New Castle, DE 19720
June 27, 2019

Attendees: Elisha Jenkins, Division for the Visually Impaired (DVI); Rob Schmidtkofer, Director of Business Enterprise Program; Wayne Marsh, Committee Chairman; Anthony Paolini, Committee Member; Mark Ridenour, Division for the Visually Impaired; Bill DeGraffenreid, Business Enterprise Program; Jill Morrison, Division for the Visually Impaired; Andy Kloepper, Division for the Visually Impaired; and Debra Mills-Joe, Division for the Visually Impaired.

Public: James Baxter

Wayne Marsh called the meeting to order at 10:04 A.M.

Rules of Engagement: Rob Schmidtkofer reviewed the rules of engagement.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes from the May 23, 2019 BVC meeting were reviewed. Anthony Paolini made motion to approve the May minutes. Wayne Marsh seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Program Finance: Mark Ridenour provided the financial report of the BEP/BVC accounts. Electronic banking was discussed as an option for BEP operators. A future discussion will occur when more information is obtained.

Director's Report: Elisha Jenkins presented the healthy vending sales comparison analysis of May 2018 to May 2019. This is the second month in a row with a decrease in sales. Andy Kloepper has requested that Canteen conduct an analysis of the locations and the units sold.

Elisha Jenkins recommended that BEP/BVC come up with a marketing strategy that promotes the program within DHSS.

The Dunkin Donuts site at the Carvel State Office Building reopened on Wednesday, June 26, 2019.

The new deli at the New Castle County Courthouse will open on July 9, 2019.

DelDot micro market will open in September 2019.

The placement of the new vending machine at the Christiana location is to occur in October 2019.

The week of June 24, 2019, five students engaged in the Envision Level-Up program at the University of Kansas. This helped re-enforce their technology skills.

Mission Transition students spent a week on the campus of Delaware State University. They participated in college classes, job interviews, and experienced dorm living.

Two students participated in the Summer Youth Employment Program. DVI provided Sensitivity Training to four Summer Youth Coordinators.

Summer Academy Camp will take place on July 8 -19 with students ranging from ages five - 21. Wayne Marsh offered his assistance/service with the Summer Academy Camp.

Elisha Jenkins attended a Reach Riverside meeting. Reach Riverside supports the revitalization of the downtown Wilmington area. Activities they will be performing are up-grading houses in the area and making the Kingswood Community Center a hub for senior programs, youth activities and other activities. The teen warehouse at the Kingswood Community Center will serve as an innovative space for the community. DHSS will have an employee there to connect individuals to services.

Dr. Fabiana Pearla from Salus University, Director of Orientation and Mobility, is currently conducting research to connect projects about orientation and mobility and awareness to blindness and visual impairments with First Responders and Law Enforcement. The work DVI's O&M team has performed with New Castle County and the State Police brought Dr. Pearla's attention to Delaware. She will combine the Pennsylvania perspective with Delaware's and continue to conduct research to come up with awareness strategies to ensure Law Enforcement officials and First Responders are sensitive to blind and visually impaired population. It was suggested that Melodye May set up Violent Intruder Preparedness Response (VIPR) training. Anthony Paolini offered his services in this training.

The Material Center has moved from the Cornell Business Park to the back of the Biggs Building. Open House is forthcoming.

The Joint Legislative Oversight and Sunset Committee legislation creating a task force has passed. A series of public meetings will be held to review the recommendations as well as the language. Legislation states that it could be open to more than the twenty-eight recommendations originally provided. Information on meetings will be shared with BVC. DVI will work with Wayne Marsh to ensure blind vendors are represented since some recommendations pertain to the Business Enterprise Program. Active participation is required by law.

Old Business:

Strategic Plan: Rob Schmidtkofer sent the leaders of each sub-committee action items to be completed.

Operator Agreement/Expectations: The BEP/BVC is working on the Randolph Shepard Act for the state while also exploring private sector opportunities for non-federal areas. They are also looking to establish a vending facility and commissary for food trucks. Rob has made contact with Dover Airforce Base as a potential site.

Inventory Update: Will revisit at next meeting.

New Business:

Policy Updates; What we have to do for FY20: Communication between the operators and BEP needs to be explored further.

Mini BLAST: The Mini BLAST will be held in September 2019.

Public Comment: Mr. James Baxter thanked the Committee for allowing him to observe today's meeting and thought it went well.

Next meeting: July 25, 2019

Adjournment: Anthony Paolini made motion to adjourn. Wayne Marsh seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 11.50 A.M.

Respectfully submitted by,

Debra Mills-Joe

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